

to handle the shipment and all administrative activities supporting the shipment to the final destination. Top-tier couriers like FedEx have 160,000 employees in offices in 220 countries!¹⁷ In my opinion, embracing the top couriers as part of the solution sure seems preferable over treating them as part of the problem.

PILL MILLS

A pill mill is a doctor, health care facility, or clinic that prescribes or dispenses controlled prescription drugs (controlled substances) outside the scope of the prevailing standards of medical practice or violates state laws regarding the prescribing or dispensing of controlled prescription drugs.¹⁸ Florida was a haven for pill mills for many years.

My parents retired in Florida and had many retired friends with medical ailments. I remembered a few of their friends visiting pain management clinics on a frequent basis, while a neighbor suffered from depression after losing his wife of 60 years and visited a local clinic for antidepressant medications. A popular topic of conversation during their bridge games was what medications everyone was taking for their ailments. Controlled prescription drugs always seemed available for the asking. At the time, I didn't think anything of it because these people were in their 80s and at the tail end of their lives.

By 2010, according to Florida attorney general Pam Bondi, Florida led the nation in diverted prescription drugs. Seven Floridians were dying every day of prescription drug overdoses. Florida had weak regulatory oversight of pain management practices, limited oversight of physician-dispensing habits, and no statewide Prescription Drug Monitoring Program (PDMP).¹⁹

In 2011, Florida passed its Anti-Pill Mill Bill. The state instituted stronger regulatory oversight of pain management practices and physician-dispensing habits, and now has a PDMP. These measures worked! In 2010, there were more than 900 registered pain management clinics in Florida. As of January 2014, there were only 367 registered pain management clinics in Florida. In 2010, the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), through its Automation of Reports and Consolidated Orders System (ARCOS), reported that 98 of the top 100 oxycodone-dispensing physicians in the nation were located in Florida. In 2014, this number was down to zero.²⁰

There are ways to recognize pill mills. These doctors, health care facilities, or clinics will usually accept cash only and not insurance. No